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Necessary preparation

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Gandhi is a very famous biographical film, released in 1982, on the life of Mahatma Gandhi. The character of Gandhiji has been played by the English actor Ben Kingsley. It is said that Kingsley had to experience great rigour in the process of the preparations of moulding himself in Gandhiji's character. For example, Kingsley had the habit of leading a royal lifestyle – the quantity and diversity of food items at his meals far outnumbered the dishes on display at the ceremonial dining spreads of traditional kings and princes. However, for the proper portrayal of the role of Gandhiji, he observed partial starvation for a very long time.

Kingsley had a plump body, while Gandhiji was a man with a thin frame who would often walk holding a stick in his hand for support. It was therefore important that when Kingsley came on screen, he should appear to the audience as slender in built just like the real Gandhi. For this reason, before the making of the movie Kingsley would eat very less or remain hungry in order that he could look slim. As a result, he was able to reduce his weight by seven kg. The Marathi woman who has starred in the movie as Gandhi's wife, Kasturba Gandhi, also had to adhere to a similar demanding and harsh lifestyle prior to playing her role.

For a person to enact the role of a fictional character in a movie is extremely less difficult than to perform the task of a leader who has to guide his community in real life. In spite of the enormity of this task, it is very strange that when it comes to the responsibility of guiding their community, people make haste to plunge into the field without any preparations at all.

Training and instructing of one's people are undoubtedly the most challenging of duties. Those who shoulder the responsibility of guiding their community without equipping themselves adequately are committing a grave mistake.